

ART. II.—*On Camel Litters for the Wounded.*—By H. PIDDINGTON, ESQ.

*To the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department.*

SIR,—I have to beg you will do me the honor to submit, for the consideration of the Honorable the President in Council, and, if approved, for transmission to the Right Honorable the Governor General of India, the accompanying Memorandum and sketches. The importance of the subject to the interests of humanity, and to the movements of a military force, will, I trust, excuse the intrusion of it upon his Honor's attention.

CALCUTTA,  
15th February, 1839.

I have, &c.  
H. PIDDINGTON.

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*Memorandum.*

In the countries towards which the Army of the Indus is now advancing, it is nearly certain that no extra dooly-bearers for the carriage of the sick and wounded can be procured; and of even those taken with the force, it may be doubtful if they can be kept long together should the advance be prolonged far beyond the frontier. The sick and wounded then would, in this case, be left without the means of carriage, and not only many valuable lives might be so lost, but important military operations might be greatly impeded, or even prevented. I found the other day, in the course of my reading, what appears to be so simple and cheap a plan of providing against this cruel aggravation of the miseries and losses of war, that I am induced to lay it before the Right Honorable the Governor General, not doubting that he will allow it a trial.

The plan I allude to, is in the "Memoires de Chirurgie Militaire du Baron Larrey," a name standing so high in the annals of his profession for every talent and virtue which can adorn it, that nothing falling from his pen can be unimportant. I translate here the passage, which is found in vol. i. p. 278, of the "Campagnes d' Egypte."

Preparations for the campaign in Syria were ordered—

"The Medical Staff assembled to concert the necessary arrangements for their branch of the service in the army destined for this campaign. I was particularly occupied in providing every thing necessary to insure assistance to the wounded whom we might expect on such a painful and perilous expedition. The means of carriage were the first object of my attention, for merely dressing the wounded on the field of battle was

insufficient; they were moreover, to be placed out of the reach of the Arabs, and to be saved from the horrors of hunger and thirst, to which they would have been exposed if not promptly carried off. We had to employ for this purpose the camel—the only beasts of burden in the country; and to render the means of carriage easy for the wounded, as well as light for the animals, I had a hundred baskets\* made cradle-wise, two for each camel, which were carried, one on each side, suspended by elastic straps. They were so made that they did not in the least impede his paces, or his movements, and yet were long enough, by means of a lengthening flap on hinges at one-end, to carry a wounded man lying down at full length.”

In adopting this plan, the simplest methods seem to be those most likely to succeed, and to be least subject to get out of order; and I should suggest that a few be made of basket-work—nothing is so durable as the entire ratan if it can be procured,—as well as some of the frame-work kind shewn in the drawing.

For the simplest sort a cradle-like basket, higher at one end to raise the head comfortably, and a tarpaulin for rainy weather, seem to be all that is necessary. The straps or slings for this, should, I think, be fastened to bent iron bars going *round* the cradle, (not fastened to the sides of it,) and turned into a ring at the *inner, upper* side, sufficiently strong and properly placed. A spare ring or two may be added when necessary for steadying the whole, and a short plank should be placed outside across the bottom, where the iron bars take, that they may not cut in upon the basket.

A frame of light wood, with a corded net-work bottom, should be placed inside, and a quilted mattress and covering; the last pretty wide, so as to be doubled if required, will be sufficient for the inside. There should also be two pillows, one for the head, and another to lay at the side, if required by the patient to steady himself against the motion of the animal.

Any intelligent officer accustomed to Camel-carriage will be able to arrange the lesser details of the necessary ropes, spare slings, &c. as well as the fitting of the curtain and tarpaulin, and a medical officer will easily add those necessary for the safety and comfort of the wounded and sick.

H. PIDDINGTON.

CALCUTTA, 12th February, 1839.

\* “*Paniers disposés en forme de berceau*” are the words used; though the Baron’s plate represents frames with curtains, which would have been expressed by the words “*Cadres avec des rideaux*.” Probably the plate may represent a better sort for the officers, and the Baron has forgotten to mention this?

## MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

To the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India,  
Military Department, Calcutta.

SIR,—I have had the honor of receiving and laying before the Right Honorable the Governor General your letter No. 473 of the 25th ultimo, with its enclosures herewith returned, from Mr. Piddington, submitting a memorandum, with sketch of a Camel litter for the conveyance of the sick and wounded in the Army of the Indus.

In reply, I am instructed to convey the expression of His Lordship's acknowledgments to Mr. Piddington for his useful communication, a copy of which will be forwarded to His Excellency Lieut.-General Sir John Kean, K. C. B. Commanding the Army of the Indus, for information.

J. STUART, Lt. Col.

ART. III.—*Note by DR. KEAN of Moorshedabad, on DR. STEWART'S Table of Mortality among Hindu Females.*

*To the Secretaries of the Asiatic Society.*

SIR,—The table furnished by Dr. Stewart, and published in the Journal of the Society for April last, may be expected to attract much attention. Its results are unexpected and startling. Considering the ignorance that prevails on the subject of Indian statistics, the unexpectedness of such information may be no argument against its accuracy; but the frightful mortality which the Table exhibits as arising from one source, will lead many to doubt its correctness, and all, to *wish* that there may have been some error in the data on which it is based.

We learn from the Table that *one-fifth* of the female population of Bengal die in childbed. But we know that only a *portion* of the female population *can*, during any given period, suffer from this cause of mortality. This portion might perhaps, without involving much error, be estimated at *one-third* of the whole; and if so, a mortality amounting to *one-fifth* of the female population will be equivalent to *three-fifths* of the portion actually liable to that cause of mortality;—in other words, out of every *five* of the mothers in Bengal, *three* will die in childbed.

It is not however by arguments of this kind, nor indeed by arguments of any kind, that the truth of the Table can either be established or overturned. A census ought to be taken, and accurate